

LINCOLN,

—THE—

Capital of Nebraska.

A COMPLETE HISTORY OF ITS FOUNDATION AND
GROWTH UP TO THE PRESENT TIME, TOGETHER
WITH A FULL DESCRIPTION OF ALL THE
PUBLIC STATE BUILDINGS, SALT
SPRINGS, AND OTHER MATTERS
OF INTEREST, SITUATED
THERE AT

BY

J. H. AMES,

ATTORNEY AT LAW.

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA.

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA:
STATE JOURNAL POWER PRESS PRINT,
1870

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LINCOLN, NEBRASKA, June 22nd, 1870

We the undersigned officers and Commissioners of Public Buildings of the State of Nebraska, do hereby certify that we have carefully examined the proof sheets of the following pamphlet and that we are thoroughly satisfied that the same is a true, correct and impartial history of the town of Lincoln, and of the several public enterprises and matters therein discussed.

DAVID BUTLER,
Governor.

JOHN GILLESPIE,
Auditor.

THOMAS P. KENNARD,
Secretary of State.



L I N C O L N .

CHAPTER I.

By an act of the Legislature, approved June 14th, 1867, it was provided that the Governor, Secretary and Auditor of State, should be Commissioners for the purpose of locating the seat of government and public buildings of the State of Nebraska, and they were vested with the necessary powers and authority for proceeding, as soon as practicable, to effect that purpose, and required on or before the 15th day of July in the same year, to select from among certain lands belonging to the State, and lying within the counties of Seward, Saunders, Butler and Lancaster, "a suitable site, of not less than six hundred and forty acres lying in one body, for a town, due regard being had to its accessibility from all portions of the State and its general fitness for a Capital."

The Commissioners were also required, immediately upon such selections being made, to appoint a competent surveyor and proceed to "survey, lay off and stake out the said tract of land into lots, blocks, streets, alleys, and public squares or reservations for public buildings;" and the act declared that such town when so laid out and surveyed, should "be named and known as Lincoln," and the same was thereby declared to be "the permanent seat of government of the State of Nebraska, at which all the public offices of the State should be kept, and at which all the sessions of the Legislature thereof should be held."

The act further provided that the lots in the alternate blocks, not reserved as aforesaid, in said town, should, after notice thereof had been given by advertisement for the time and in the manner therein prescribed, be offered for sale to the highest and best bidder; and the Commissioner, were authorized, after having held the sale for five successive days, as therein provided, at Lincoln, Nebraska City and Omaha, to adjourn the same to be held at such other place or places within or without the States as they might see proper, provided that at such sales no lots should be sold for a less price than a minimum to be fixed on each lot by the Commissioners, previous to the opening of the sales. All moneys received for the

sale of said lots were declared to be a State Building Fund, and were directed to be deposited in the State Treasury and kept separate from all other funds for that purpose. Notice was directed to be issued immediately after the sale of lots, asking from architects plans and specifications for a building, the foundations of which should be of stone, and the superstructure of stone or brick, which should be suitable for the two houses of the Legislature, and the executive offices of the State, and which might be designed as a portion of a larger edifice, but the cost of which should not exceed fifty thousand dollars. Provision was also made for the letting of the contract for its construction, and appointing a superintendent thereof, and also for the erection at Lincoln, as soon as sufficient funds therefor could be secured by the sale of public lands or otherwise, of a State University, Agricultural College and Penitentiary; but no appropriation, other than of the State lands and lots as above described, was made for the aid of any of the enterprises herein mentioned.

What was the result of sending three men fifty miles out into an unbroken, and at that time, almost unknown prairie, to *speak* into existence simply by the magic of their own unconquerable, though unaided, enterprise and perseverance, a city that should not only be suitable for the seat of Government of the State, but should be able, almost as soon as its name was pronounced, to contribute from its own resources sufficient funds for the erection of a State House and other necessary public State buildings, remains to be seen.

It appears from the report of the Commissioners, made to the Senate and House of Representatives at its first regular session, held in January, 1869, that, having provided themselves with an outfit, and employed Mr. Augustus F. Harvey, as surveyor, to ascertain the location of the lines of the proposed sites, they left Nebraska City on the afternoon of the 18th of July, 1867, for the purpose of making the selection required in the act.

After having visited and examined the town sites of Saline City, or "Yankee Hill," and Lancaster, in Lancaster county, they proceeded to visit and examine the several proposed sites in each of the counties named in the act, in which occupations they were engaged until the 29th of the same month, when they returned, and made a more thorough examination of the two sites above referred to, at which time the favorable impressions received of Lancaster on their first visit were confirmed. Says the report:

"We found a gently undulating surface, its principal elevation being near the centre of the proposed new site. The village already established being in the midst of a thrifty and considerable agricultural population; rock, timber, and water power available within short distances; the centre of the great saline region within two miles; and in addition to all other claims, the special advantage was that the location was at the centre of a circle, of about 110 miles in diameter, along or near the circumference of which are the Kansas State line directly south, the important towns of Pawnee City, Nebraska City, Plattsmouth, Omaha, Fremont and Columbus.

* * * *

Under these circumstances we entertained the proposition of the people residing in the vicinity of Lancaster, offer-

ing to convey to the State in *fee simple* the west half of the west half of section 25, the east half and the southwest quarter of section 26, (the last named quarter being saline land,) all in town 10, range 6 east; the whole embracing 800 acres, and upon which it was proposed to erect the new town. In addition, the Trustees of the Lancaster Seminary Association proposed to convey to the State, for an addition to the site named in the foregoing proposition, the town site of Lancaster, reserving, however, certain lots therein which had been disposed of in whole or in part to the purchasers thereof."

After being satisfied of the sufficiency of the titles proposed to be conveyed to the State, and having carefully "considered all the circumstances of the condition of the saline lands, the advantage of the situation, its central position, and the value of its surroundings over a district of over *twelve thousand square miles* of rich agricultural country, it was determined to accept the proposition made by the owners of the land." Accordingly on the afternoon of the 29th of July the Commissioners assembled at the house of W. T. Donovan, in Lancaster, and by a unanimous vote formally declared the present site of the Capital city of Lincoln, which action was first made public by a proclamation issued on the 14th day of August next following.

Since this report was delivered, and during the summer of 1869, Messrs. Cahn and Evans, upon land leased from the State for that purpose, have sunk a shaft to the depth of five hundred feet for the purpose of testing the extent and value of the salt deposits at and near Lincoln. Through the indications derived from the rapid increase in the strength of the brine in proportion to the depth to which the well has been sunk, and from the character of the rock, strata and other formations through which they have penetrated, it is now rendered certain beyond a probable doubt, that when developed the deposits will prove as rich and productive as any in the United States, while it is the intention of parties now interested to effect such development without unnecessary delay. Had the Commissioners been as well apprised of these facts at the time, as they are now, they might have made their final decision upon their first visit to Lancaster, and saved themselves the expense and fatigue of a ten days' ride through the interior.

On the 15th of August, Messrs. Harvey and Smith, Engineers, with a corps of assistants, commenced the survey of the town, the design being calculated for the making of a beautiful city. The streets are one hundred and twenty feet wide, and all except the business streets capable of being improved with a street park outside the curb line; as, for instance: On the one hundred feet streets, pavements twelve feet wide and a park or double row of trees outside the pavement, and planted twelve feet apart so as to admit of a grass plat between, may be made on both sides the street. This will leave on the one hundred feet streets a roadway fifty-two feet wide; with pavements as above, and parks fifteen feet wide, will leave a roadway on the one hundred and twenty feet streets of sixty feet; while on the business streets a ninety-foot roadway was thought to be amply sufficient for the demands of trade.

Reservations of about twelve acres each were made for the State House State University, and a City Park, these being at about equal distances from each other.

Reservations of one block each were made for a Court House for Lancaster county, for a City Hall and Market Space, for a State Historical and Library Association, and *seven* other squares in proper locations for public schools. Reservations were also made of three lots each in desirable locations for ten religious denominations, upon an understanding with the parties making the selections on behalf of the several denominations, that the Legislature would require of them a condition that the property should only be used for religious purposes, and that some time would be fixed within which suitable houses of worship, costing not less than some reasonable minimum amount, should be erected. One lot each was also reserved for the use of the Independent Order of Good Templars, and Odd Fellows and the Order of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons. These reservations were afterward confirmed by the Legislature, with conditions recommended by the Commissioners, and religious denominations were required to build on their reserved lots previous to or during the summer of 1870.

In anticipation of the completion of the survey, due advertisement thereof was made as provided by law, and a sale of lots opened at Lincoln on the 17th day of September, for the purpose of raising the necessary funds for commencing the construction of the State House.

Owing to an unpropitious state of the weather but few bidders were present, and the results of the first day's sales were light and disheartening; during their continuation, however, circumstances were changed for the better, and at the end of five days \$34,000 had been realized. Subsequent sales were held at Nebraska City and Omaha, which by the 4th day of October had increased that amount to the sum of \$53,000. Sales were subsequently held at Lincoln on the 17th of June and September, 1868, from which were realized the sum of \$22,580.

On the 10th of September, 1867, the Commissioners issued their notice to architects, inviting, for a period of thirty days, plans and specifications for a State House; and upon the 10th of October, after having considered the merits of the several plans presented, they concluded to accept that of Prof. John Morris, of Chicago, whom they thereupon appointed superintendent of construction, and issued notice to builders, inviting proposals for a term of three months, for the erection of the work; Prof. Morris in the meantime commencing such preliminary work, as excavations for foundations, delivery of material for foundation, and other arrangements as should tend to facilitate the progress of the work after the contract was let.

On the 10th of November the superintendent caused the ground to be broken in the presence of a number of the citizens of Lancaster, the removal of the first earth being awarded to Master Frele Morton Donavan the first child born in, and the youngest child of the oldest settler of Lancaster county.

On the 11th of January, 1868, the bid of Mr. Joseph Ward, proposing to furnish the material and labor, and erect the building contemplated in the contract for the sum of \$49,000, was accepted, and from that time

forward the work steadily progressed, with the exception of a few unavoidable delays, until its completion.

On account, however, of the increasing wants of the State, the difficulties attending, the changes of material and increased amount of work and additional accommodation found necessary and advisable, the Commissioners deemed it expedient to exceed the amount of expenditure contemplated in the statute; the additional expense being defrayed from the proceeds of the sales of lots and lands appropriated for that purpose, and the cost of the State House in its present state of completion will fall little if any, short of one hundred thousand dollars.

It was originally intended that the walls of the building should be built of red sand stone, and faced with blue limestone, but upon proceeding with the work the architect and builder found that the difficulties attending the procurement if the last named material would, unless that object was abandoned, result in an impossibility of the completion of the work at contract prices; and in so far retarding its progress as to prevent its erection in time for the use of the next session of the Legislature. Its use, therefore, was accordingly abandoned, and it was decided to substitute in lieu thereof the Magnesian lime-stone of Beatrice, which the experience of the architect had proved to be of far better character for building purposes than the blue lime-stone, it being less liable to wear or damage from frost or fire or any other action of the elements.

This change having been made the work was pushed vigorously forward, and on the third day of December, 1868, was so far completed as to be ready for the occupancy of the State officers, and the Governor, therefore, on that day issued his Proclamation announcing the removal of the seat of government from Omaha to Lincoln and ordering the transportation of the archives of the State to the new Capitol; and as a result for which we are in great degree indebted to the faithful and diligent labors of Mr. Ward, the contractor, and the careful oversight of Prof. Morris, it is believed that the State House is at the same time the cheapest and the most substantial building of its size west of the Mississippi river.

The building as originally designed and to be ultimately completed, is to be of the Roman Italian style of architecture; one hundred and twenty feet in height from the ground to the top of the main tower, covering an area, including the intervals between the wings and central portion of the building, of one hundred and seventy-five feet in length by one hundred feet in breadth, and costing in the aggregate not less than one-half million of dollars.

The portion already completed consists of the central portion of the building which, in accordance with the design, will extend fifty feet in width by one hundred and twenty-one feet in length between and uniting the two wings, there being a projection on either side, in the center, fifteen feet outward from the main walls and twenty-six feet in width, giving the building the form a transept and making the entire width within the projections eighty feet.

The building as it now stands contains a basement nine feet in height and eighty feet in length by twenty-six feet in width; and, on the first floor, six Executive rooms for the use of the Auditor and Secretary of

State ; six Committee rooms, and four other small rooms for the use of assistants or others, seventeen feet in length by eleven in width ; a Library room twenty-four feet in length by twenty-two in breadth ; and a Central Hall twenty-two feet square, the distance in height between the first and second floors being fourteen feet.

On the second floor are contained the Representative Hall, forty-six feet square and thirty feet in height, including galleries ; the Senate Chamber, forty-six feet in length by twenty-eight in width, also thirty feet in height, including galleries ; the Supreme Court room and Armory, of the same dimensions as the Library room below, and an Entrance Hall, Governor's room and Adjutant General's room, each twenty-two feet square.

The wings, when added will be one hundred feet in length by twenty-six feet in breadth, and will be attached, at equal distances from each end, to the ends of the longer portion of the central structure running at right angles therewith, and will contain on the first floor of each, four additional Executive rooms ; on the second floor four rooms in each for the use of the Officers and Clerks of the Legislature ; and on the third floor eight additional rooms in each for the use of officers, assistants, and special legislative committees. On the corners of the wings farthest removed from the center of the building will be constructed four towers rising to the height of seventy feet, which will be built continuously from the basement of the building and of such material and in such a manner as to be entirely impervious to fire, and will be divided off into apartments suitable for the safe keeping of the State archives, public documents and statutes.

The building stands in the center of the square reserved for that purpose in a pleasing situation at the summit of a slight eminence on the east side of the town-site, of the whole of which it commands a view.

Measures have been taken for improving the grounds, which are surrounded by a neat and appropriate *piquet* fence—by the planting of shade trees—the building of walks and avenues, and the additions of other embellishments (the sum of three thousand dollars having already been expended for these purposes and in grading the grounds,) so as, that the building and its surroundings may be in keeping, and altogether the most elegant and imposing of any State buildings in the Western States.

CHAPTER II.

THE STATE UNIVERSITY.

That selfish propensity in human nature which induces individuals and associations of men to adopt and sustain policies which result directly in their own injury and inconvenience, for the sole purpose of monopolizing the use and benefit of gifts bestowed by Providence alike upon all, is not better exemplified than in the history of the cause of popular education.

Had not God rendered it impossible, men would have been eager to live in dark and ill-ventilated apartments, in the midst of nauseous and deadly odors, for the sake of depriving their fellows of an equal participation with

themselves in the enjoyment of the genial sun-light and the pure air of Heaven. This inference is at least rendered probable by the fact that there once was a society of men who sought by every means in their power to confine all the learning and mental culture in christendom to members of their own body, although they were fully aware that by so doing they were withholding the only effectual means by which the masses of the people could be reduced from a state of anarchy and confusion in which the rights of life, liberty and property were continually violated, to a state of peace, order and prosperity. It would be both interesting and profitable to pursue the history of the conflict that ensued between privileged bigotry on the one hand and defrauded humanity on the other, and to ascertain the times, manner and degree in which mankind have gradually recovered their inalienable right—each to cultivate his own mind by the acquisition of such knowledge and in such degree as his tastes and ability will permit. But time and space are limited and the story is long, for the cause has been hotly contested, and many appeals have been argued, some in legislative assemblies and some at the point of the bayonet, and in the Old World the final decision has not yet been rendered.

It was provided by the act to which reference has been already made, that the State University and State Agricultural College should be united as one educational institution, and should be located upon a reservation selected by the Commissioners, in Lincoln, or upon lands belonging to the State and adjacent thereto, and that the necessary building should be erected as soon as funds could be secured from the sale of lands donated to the State for that purpose, or from other sources. By a subsequent act, approved February 15th, 1869, provision was made for the establishment and organization of "The University of Nebraska," declaring the object of the institution to be "to afford the inhabitants of this State the means of acquiring a thorough knowledge of the various branches of literature, science and the arts;" the Board of Regents, in whom its general government was vested, to consist of the Governor—to be *ex-officio* President thereof,—the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Chancellor of the University, all of whom should be members by virtue of their offices, and three other persons from each of the three Judicial Districts of the State, to be appointed by the Legislature in joint session.

It was provided that the University should consist of six departments, as follows:

First. A College of Ancient and Modern Literature, Mathematics and the Natural Sciences, to contain thirteen professorial chairs, for the teaching, among other things, of ancient and modern languages, theology, logic, metaphysics and natural and moral philosophy.

Second. A College of Agriculture, containing seven chairs, for the teaching of chemistry, botany, meteorology, etc.

Third. A College of Law, containing five chairs, for the teaching of law and equity.

Fourth. A College of Medicine, containing seven chairs, for the teaching of the different branches of that science and medical jurisprudence.

Fifth. A College of Practical Science, Civil Engineering and Mechanics, containing thirteen chairs; and

Sixth. A College of the Fine Arts, containing six chairs, for the teaching of music, painting, sculpture, and the history of art.

Ninety thousand acres of land having been donated to the State by act of Congress approved July 2d, 1862, for the benefit and endowment of an Agricultural College, the Governor was required to set apart two sections of any of such land, or of any saline land belonging to the State, for the purpose of a Model Farm, as a part of the College of Agriculture, which land when so set apart should not be disposed of for any other purpose. The several buildings of the six Colleges of the University were required to be created within a radius of four miles of the State House, and the plans for the superstructural work of each of the University buildings were required, before any work should be commenced thereon, to be submitted by the Commissioners to the Board of Regents, and the architect was required to make such alterations in his plans and specifications as a majority of the Board might suggest, to the end that the buildings might have the best possible adaptation to the purposes for which they were intended.

The Regents were directed in the organization of the University to fill only such chairs in the first, second and fifth Colleges as the wants of the institution should demand, and the several professors chosen may be required to perform duties, in their respective departments of education, in more than one department or College until the number of students shall so increase as to demand exclusive attention in their own departments. The Regents may, when the number of students in any one particular branch of study requires, elect one or more tutors to give instruction in such branch of study; but such tutors will not be considered as belonging to the Faculty of the College in which they are employed, nor can any new professorship be established without legislative authority.

The Board of Regents have exclusive authority to confer degrees and grant diplomas, but no student will be entitled to receive any diploma or degree, at the time of his graduation, unless he shall have been recommended for such honor by the Faculty of the College in which his studies have been pursued. A fee of five dollars is prescribed for admission to any College of the University, the standard of acquirements being left to be fixed by the Regents; provided, that any person producing a certificate from a County Superintendent of Common Schools, that he has passed honorably through the course of study prescribed in a High School, under the Common School laws of the State, may be admitted without further examination.

All persons residing within the State who pay, or, being non-residents, whose parents or guardians pay, not less than thirty dollars annually of school taxes to the State, and who shall fulfill the requirements above mentioned, may be admitted to any organized College of the University without the payment of any other than the matriculation fee during the course of four years.

No person because of age, sex, color, or nationality, can be deprived of the privileges of the University, and the Regents may, upon proper and sufficient evidence of the good character of any person who desires admission to the University, and who is ambitious of acquiring an education, but who is unable to procure the necessary means therefor, donate to such

person all necessary text-books ; and upon a two-thirds vote may appropriate money to pay his or her expenses, provided sufficient surety be given for reimbursing the Regents within five years.

By an act, also approved February 15th, 1869, the Governor, Secretary and Auditor of State were appointed Commissioners for the purpose of selling the unsold lots and blocks on the town site of Lincoln, and of the erection of the State University and Agricultural College and a State Lunatic Asylum. Other duties were also imposed upon the Commissioners, of which mention will be made at a future time.

From the proceeds of such sales the sum of one hundred thousand dollars was appropriated and directed to be expended, under the supervision of the Commissioners, for the erection of the building herein described, upon lands previously selected for that purpose. Considerations of public policy, however, and a desire to erect a building better adapted to the present and future wants of a commonwealth rapidly increasing in wealth, population and developed resources, than they were enabled to with this amount of money, induced the Commissioners in this instance, as in the case of the State House, and of the State Lunatic Asylum to be hereafter described, to exceed the amount of expenditure contemplated in the statute. It is needless to say that this action subsequently received the hearty concurrence and approval of the Legislature.

The endowment fund of the institution is to consist of the one hundred and forty-six thousand acres of land (including the ninety thousand acres before mentioned,) donated to the State by acts of Congress approved April 19th, 1864, and July 2d, 1862, and the proceeds of such lands when sold ; and to the funds received from these sources are to be added all monies and the proceeds of all lands which may be acquired by any donation or bequest in which no other object is stated. In addition to this will be the Regents' Fund, to consist of all monies received from the proceeds of the investment of the Endowment Fund ; the proceeds of the annual rental of University and Agricultural College land leased ; the tuition and text-book fees of the students ; and of an annual tax of one mill on the dollar to be levied on all the taxable property of the State at the valuation fixed in the grand assessment roll. The proceeds of this tax for the year 1869 were in round numbers \$40,000, and it is estimated that in the year 1870 the amount derived from that source will fall little if any short of \$60,000.

Being satisfied from the results of the sales already made, and the rapidly-growing appreciation of property in and about Lincoln, caused by a constantly-increasing influx of capital and population, that sufficient funds would be realized from the sales of the unsold lots and blocks to defray the expenses of the enterprise, the Commissioners issued their notice to architects on the first day of April, 1869, inviting, for the term of sixty days, plans and specifications for the State University and Agricultural College ; and on the first day of June, having carefully considered the merits of the several plans proposed, decided to accept that of Prof. J. McBird, of Logansport, Indiana.

On the 18th day of August, previous notice having been issued to builders as required by law, the contract for erecting the superstructural por-

tion of the work, for the sum of one hundred and twenty-eight thousand four hundred and eighty dollars, was awarded to Messrs. D. J. Silvers & Son, competent and efficient workmen, also of Logansport, Indiana, with whom a stipulation was made for the completion of the building on or before the first day of December, 1870.

For the purposes of expediting the work, the contract for making the excavation and building the basement had been let to Messrs. Silvers & Son, on or about the 10th of June, for the sum of twenty-three thousand five hundred and twenty dollars, and work thereon immediately commenced; making the entire cost of the building when completed, one hundred and fifty-two thousand dollars; and on the 23d day of September, 1869, the corner-stone of the edifice was laid with appropriate Masonic ceremonies.

The building as designed by the architect is to be of a modern style of architecture, in the form of a Greek cross, and ornamented with a tower and Mansard roofs; its extreme length being one hundred and ten, and one hundred and fifty-six feet, and its height from ground line to the top of the tower, one hundred and twelve feet; from ground line to top member of the cornice, sixty-five feet.

The basement, which is now completed, is built of brown sand-stone, faced with rock-work finish, and presents at the same time an appearance of elegance, firmness and durability. It is of the form and dimensions of the building above described, is nine feet in height, and is divided off into apartments suitable for seed-rooms, store-rooms, etc., for the use of the Agricultural College, and a Laboratory for the use of the department of Natural Science and Chemistry.

The superstructure is to be built of brick; the roofs of the extensions to be covered with slate, and of the central and superior portion with tin; door and window-dressings, quoins, belt courses and entrances to be of brown sand-stone; the approaches, steps and landings of hard white limestone, the steps to be cut with six and one-half inch rise and fifteen-inch tread.

The building when completed will contain in all forty-eight rooms, of which there will be ten on the first floor for the use of the officers and members of the Faculty, besides the Geological Museum and Library, the last two to be each twenty-two feet in width by sixty-four in length. The second story is to be divided off into music, examination and recitation rooms, and will also contain the Chapel, which will be forty-six feet in width by sixty-four in length, and twenty-eight feet in height, including galleries. The third story will contain, besides the galleries of the Chapel, suitable rooms for the use of College societies; and in the fourth story there will be two Gymnasiums, each twenty-three feet in width by sixty feet in length. In the rear of the building a well forty-eight feet deep and five feet in diameter in the clear, furnishes an abundant and inexhaustible supply of fresh water.

The results of the public sales of lots and lands held at Lincoln in June and September, 1869, fully met the anticipations of the Commissioners, the amount realized therefrom exceeding three hundred thousand dollars, and furnishing sufficient funds for the completion of all the public works

commenced at Lincoln. All work connected with the University which could be carried in-doors has been continued during the winter months, and as a result the door and window-dressings, steps, landings, window-sashes, frames and mouldings and nearly all works of the above description are now completed. Three hundred and forty thousand bricks are now on hand, and the brick-yard is furnished with one thousand cords of wood and two improved brick machines capable of moulding 28,000 bricks per day, with which bricks may be made as fast as needed in the construction of the building. A sufficient amount of sand and lime is also on hand for the completion of the work, which is to be commenced on the walls during the present week, and it seems that only inevitable casualty can prevent the completion of the contract within the time stipulated.

The builders thus far are certainly deserving of credit for the faithful and workmanlike manner in which they have discharged their obligations under their first contract, and the diligent efforts they have made in pushing forward preliminary work and procuring appliances and material to ensure the early erection of the building; while the liberal endowment which the institution has received both from the General Government and the State, and the approved plan adopted for its organization, will enable it to take the first rank among the best aducational institutions of the country.

CHAPTER III.

THE LUNATIC ASYLUM.

By the act providing for the sale of the unsold lots and blocks in Lincoln, and the erection of the State University, the Commissioners were directed to locate on or near the site of said town a site for a State Lunatic Asylum, and from the proceeds of such sales the sum of fifty thousand dollars was appropriated and directed to be expended under the supervision of the Commissioners in the erection upon such plan as they should adopt of the necessary building. Accordingly a site containing about 160 acres, and situated about two miles south-west of the town, was set apart for that purpose; and after having issued the notices required by law and adopted the plan of Prof. D. Winchell, architect, from Chicago, the contract for the construction of the building was let, on or about the 15th day of August, 1869, to Joseph Ward, Esq., also formerly of Chicago, who stipulated for its completion on or before the first day of December, A. D. 1870; the contract price of the work being one hundred and twenty-eight thousand dollars.

The structure as described in the contract for its erection will be of a modern style of architecture, and will consist of a main or central building seventy-seven in length, containing four stories, which will be ornamented with a tower and Mansard roofs; its height from ground-line to the top of the tower being one hundred and twenty feet, and from ground-line to top member of cornice sixty-five feet; to which a wing will be attached on the north forty-five feet in width by sixty-nine in length, containing three

stories, and being fifty-six feet in height from the ground line to the top member of the cornice. A basement nine feet in height, extending under the entire building, will contain a kitchen thirty-six feet in length by twenty-two in width, besides fourteen other rooms of various sizes and uses arranged on either side of two corridors fourteen feet in width, bisecting respectively the basements of the main building and wing.

The superstructure will be built of the hard brown sandstone, on ornamental and durable building material of which there are numerous and inexhaustible quarries in the vicinity of Lincoln and throughout the State. The window-caps, quoins, approaches, etc., to be of the pure white limestone of Ashland, which will form a pleasant and attractive contrast with the brown stone of the walls.

Each of the first three stories will be bisected by two corridors of the same size and relative positions as those of the basement, except that the corridor running through the wing will extend into the main building and will be ninety feet in all. On the first floor there will be a dining-room twenty-five feet in length and twenty-two in width; two parlors each nineteen feet in length by fourteen in width; a sitting-room eighteen feet by eleven; a dispensary fourteen feet by twelve, and fourteen smaller rooms or wards for patients, besides eight other rooms of various sizes and uses—water-closets, bath-rooms, etc. The second and third stories will be divided off into rooms of the same number and size of those on the first floor and which are intended for similar uses. The Chapel will be on the fourth floor of the main building, and will be fifty-six feet in length by twenty-six in width. The building is so designed and to be constructed as to admit of the annexation of a wing on the south end of the main building whenever the necessities of the State shall require, without incurring any other additional expense by reason of such annexation.

The basement is already nearly or quite completed, and an efficient corps of about seventy-five men, soon to be doubled, at work in the quarries and on the building, are pushing the work rapidly forward to its completion.

The building is situated upon what was formerly a favorite Indian camping-ground, at the summit of the most considerable eminence within many miles, whence it commands a view of an immense tract of rolling prairie rapidly being subdued by the arts of husbandry and converted into a rich and prosperous farming country. A full view of Lincoln on the north-east, and the well-timbered banks of Haines' Branch and the famous Salt Creek within a short distance, serve to vary and enliven a scenery by far the most beautiful of any in this part of the State.

No provision has yet been made for manner of conducting the institution or the mode of treatment to be adopted for the patients. It is safe to conjecture, however, from the spirit that has heretofore been manifested by our Legislature and other public officers in the inauguration and prosecution of enterprises of internal improvement and benefit, and in providing for the organization of the State University, that the most approved and well-tried policy will be adopted in this instance, and that after the present season the State, instead of being obliged to ask her sister State to care for her insane patients, will be enabled to provide for them the best of care at home.

CHAPTER IV.

STATE PENITENTIARY.

The act providing for the location of the seat of government of this State and the erection of public buildings thereat, directed that a State Penitentiary should be located upon a reservation selected by the Commissioners for that purpose, in Lincoln, or upon lands belonging to the State and adjacent thereto, and that the necessary building should be erected as soon as funds could be secured.

The laws already in force provided that until the erection of a State Penitentiary, State convicts should be confined within such county jails, in any of the counties of the State, as the judges before whom their convictions should be had should designate.

At the time the Commissioners had in consideration the selection of a site and the location of the Capital, Messrs. W. T. Donavan, of Lancaster, Nebraska, and the Hon. G. H. Hilton, of Cincinnati, Ohio, as an inducement to the Commissioners to select the present site, offered to donate to the State forty acres of land situated about two and one-half miles south from the town of Lancaster (now a part of the town of Lincoln,) upon the express condition, however, that said land should be reserved by the Commissioners, and used by the State, as the site of the proposed State Penitentiary. Upon the final decision, therefore, locating the seat of government, this grant was accepted and the reservation and location made accordingly; it being understood that in case the State Penitentiary should not be erected upon such site, the same should revert to the Hon. G. H. Hilton, in whom its legal title was at that time tested.

Confident that the interests of the State, and a humane consideration for the well-being of the prisoners committed to its care, demanded that more commodious and healthful enclosures should be provided for their confinement, by which at the same time their own condition might be improved and the State might be saved a considerable expense and inconvenience; and confident also that a sufficient sum might be realized from the sale of the thirty-two thousand acres of Penitentiary lands belonging to the State to defray the expenses of the enterprise, the Governor, among the subjects submitted for legislation to a special session of the Legislature held at Lincoln in February and March, 1870, included those of providing for the erection of a State Penitentiary and providing for the care and custody of State prisoners.

Accordingly an act intended to provide for both of those objects was passed at that session, and received the approval of the Governor on the fourth day of March, 1870.

By the second section of that act provision was made for the election of three State Prison Inspectors by a ballot of both branches of the Legislature, and subsequently to its passage and approval that body met in joint session, and Messrs. W. W. Wilson, W. W. Abbey and F. Templin were duly chosen as such Inspectors.

The Inspectors were directed to proceed immediately in the construction of a suitable building for a State Penitentiary, which it was declared

should be erected and continually maintained for the care and custody of convicts in Nebraska, upon the forty acres of land set apart for that purpose and already referred to, and in such position as to be accessible to railway tracks; the Inspectors, however, having power, upon the happening of certain contingencies not necessary to be herein mentioned, to re-locate the building upon any other suitable grounds, of not less than forty acres, within a radius of five miles of Lincoln; provided, among other things, that such re-location should not occasion additional expense to the State.

After having caused to be inserted, from the first week in April to the first Monday in June, 1870, in such newspapers as they should designate, a notice of that event, the Inspectors were directed to proceed, at public sales to be held at the Capital, to sell a sufficient quantity of the Penitentiary lands from which to realize funds sufficient for erecting the necessary building. The sales may be continued from day to day, and at the discretion of the Inspectors may be adjourned for a length of time not exceeding six months, but no lands can be sold for a less sum than five dollars per acre.

The funds arising from the sales of said lands were appropriated to the building of a Penitentiary, and were directed to be paid into the treasury and kept separate from all other funds subject to be drawn out and expended for that purpose.

At the time of advertising for such sales, notices are directed to be issued to architects inviting the submission of plans and specifications for the structure, which are to be continued to be received until the first day of the public sales, at which time one of such plans as may be presented shall be selected and adopted and placed on file in the office of the Secretary of State, where it will be kept open by him for inspection for the space of one week, during which time proposals from builders for the erection of a building in accordance therewith will be received, and on the 13th of June, 1870, the contract therefor will be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder at the Representative Hall of the Capitol.

The walls of the building containing the cells and of the prison yard are to be constructed of good substantial stone masonry, and those of the cells will, if thought necessary, be provided with a suitable iron lining. The material used will be subject to the examination and approval of the Inspectors, who may reject any which they may deem unsuitable.

The contract for its erection stipulates that the walls shall be constructed of stone of a suitable size and of firm texture; that the cement and all other material used shall be of a good quality, and that the work shall be completed in a good and workman-like manner within one year from the time of the letting of the contract.

The act also provides for the appointment and election of a Warden, Chaplain, Physician, and other necessary officers of the Penitentiary, and the salaries which they shall receive and the discipline which they shall observe and enforce in the government of the prisoners intrusted to their care.

The shops connected with the Penitentiary and such vacant ground as they may deem proper may be leased by the Inspectors and Warden for

such term as they see fit, not exceeding five years in any one term, to parties from whom they can obtain the highest price therefor; and to the lessees of the shops and fixtures they may, subject to similar restrictions, let the services of all able-bodied convicts; all or any of such contracts requiring for their validity the approval of the Governor and Auditor of State. The rents, revenues and profits derived from the leasing of the shops and grounds and from the letting of convict labor are to be paid into the State Treasury. When any convict is discharged from prison the Warden is required to furnish him, at the expense of the State, (if not already provided therewith,) with a decent suit of clothes and ten dollars in money; and he is also required to furnish, at the expense of the State, a Bible to each convict who can read.

The Governor, members of the Legislature, and all State officers and regularly authorized ministers of the Gospel may visit the Penitentiary at pleasure, but no other person will be entitled to admission thereto without the special permission of the Warden and the payment of such fee as the Inspectors may see fit to establish.

The Inspectors at their first meeting under the act were required to make such arrangements for the safe keeping of the convicts then in the State as to them should seem wise and prudent, and provide for the safe keeping of all other State prisoners; and as soon as such arrangements had been made they were directed to receive and transport the convicts to the State Penitentiary, and were empowered to use their labor in its erection.

By an act, "to provide for the temporary care and custody of the State prisoners of the State of Nebraska, and to provide a temporary penitentiary for such prisoners," also approved March 4th, 1870, the sum of five thousand dollars was appropriated from the State Treasury for those purposes, and the State Prison Inspectors and Warden were directed to provide a temporary State Penitentiary at or near Lincoln, and to transfer thereto all the prisoners confined in the county jails or elsewhere in the State, to be there put at work upon the public buildings, and in the stone quarries, for the use and benefit of the State.

Pursuant to these directions the Inspectors, on the 4th day of April, 1870, issued their notice to builders, inviting, until the 28th day of April next following, sealed proposals for the erection of such temporary Penitentiary, the walls of which will be constructed entirely of stone of a suitable size and firm texture. On the first day of April, 1870, the Inspectors caused to be inserted, in such papers as they deemed advisable, an advertisement to the effect that on the sixth day of June next following they would offer the above mentioned Penitentiary lands for sale at a public auction; the said lands to be appraised by them previous to the sales and sold for cash to the highest bidders over the amount of such appraisements. A full and minute description was inserted of the lands to be offered, the total amount of which is 34,044 acres. These lands were donated to the State for that purpose by an Act of Congress approved April 19th, 1864, and are many of them among the finest in the State, and situated within a radius of ten miles from Lincoln.

At the same time notice was issued to Architects and Builders, inviting

until the sixth day of June next following, plans and specifications for the erection of the State Penitentiary, and reciting that the building will be erected at or near Lincoln, at a cost unlimited by law; and that it will be constructed entirely of stone, and in such a manner that additions may be made thereto as the future wants of the State may require. Architects submitting plans and specifications for the building were requested to accompany the same with proposals of the sums for which they or some responsible builder will perform the work; it being recited that the contract therefor will be awarded to the lowest bidder on the 13th day of June, 1870, as required by law.

The Temporary Penitentiary has been erected on the forty acres of land donated and reserved for the site of the State Penitentiary as above mentioned. It is eighty feet in length by forty in width and one story in height, and contains, besides two large cells for the confinement of convicts, the necessary rooms for the temporary use of the Warden and other officers of the prison, a kitchen, store-rooms, eet., and meets, in its department, all the immediate necessities of the State. Upon the completion of the State Penitentiary, which it is now determined to erect on the same reservation, this temporary prison will be converted into shops in which the labor of the convicts will be employed under the direction of the prison authorities.

CHAPTER V.

SALT BASIN AND WELL.

Mention has already been made of the famous Salt Basin near the center of which the Capital of this State is situated. Concerning the value of the salt deposits contained therein, as is usually the case in similar instances, various conflicting opinions have been expressed by two classes of persons who were confident that they possessed information sufficient to form a positive belief, on the one hand that it was real, and on the other that it was illusory.

In the following remarks an effort will be made to furnish a knowledge of the facts and circumstances, established by experience, upon which it may be safe to base a final judgment. So far as known no similar effort has previously been made; and while care will be taken that any information that may be contained herein shall be authentic, yet it must of necessity be less full and complete than may be desirable, or than it might be made if there had been any thorough and detailed official investigation and report thereon.

In the absence of any such assistance recourse will be had to parties who are engaged in the business of making salt by solar evaporation and in sinking the well for the purpose of testing the strength and value of the brine to be obtained beneath the surface at this place, any information derived from which sources may be relied upon as being entirely authentic and trustworthy.

In a pamphlet published by Mr. Augustus F. Harvey in 1869, and entitled "Nebraska as It Is," the follow passages occur :

"In Lancaster county, averaging forty-five miles from and west of the Missouri river, lies a great Salt Basin. Within an area of twelve by twenty-five miles, through which Salt Creek runs in a north-easterly direction, are found innumerable springs of salt water, containing 28.8 per cent. of salt by weight ; the product itself containing ninety-five to ninety-seven parts of chloride of sodium (pure salt,) and three to five parts of chlorides and sulphates of magnesium, calcium, lime, &c.

"There is no question of the vast wealth which will some day be derived from this region. The absence of fuel for the purpose of manufacture is more than compensated for by the excessive dryness of the atmosphere and the consequent rapidity of evaporation. From the 1st of April to the middle of November scarcely a day passes without a warm, dry wind. During the months of June, July, August and September the winds are almost constant."

[Mr. Harvey afterwards demonstrated by actual experiment that the average evaporation during the months last named is at the rate of ten inches of saturated brine in sixty hours, of fresh water in seventy-two hours.]

"The salt made by boiling or washing the deposits around the spring crystallizes like the finest table salt. That from solar evaporation, or over slow artificial heat, forms large crystals from 1-16 to $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch, and is more translucent and snowy than the Syracuse or Kanawha salt.

"The location of the salt region is an evidence of that wisdom and goodness of the Creator which men are slow to acknowledge, but upon which all human welfare must rest. It is a curious fact that, as far as we know, all the principal deposits of this one absolute necessity to the preservation of animal life are situated about equal distances apart, and with an apparent forethought of the commercial relations of the territory between them. This will be aparent when one marks upon the map the New York, Michigan, Virginia, Missouri, Wisconsin, Tennessee, Texas, Nebraska, Dakota, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, New Mexico and Arizona salt regions, and notes the nearly uniform spaces between them."

Usually during a large portion of the summer but little rain falls in any part of the State, such droughts, however, seldom occurring until after the grain crops are fully developed and beyond the reach of any injury therefrom, the deep and porous soil having a singular power of retaining the moisture received by it in the earlier portion of the season. For this reason vegetation is found to thrive, unaffected by drought, long after the surface of the ground has become so excessively dry that the water on the surfaces of streams or in other exposed situations becomes almost the only considerable source from which the atmosphere is supplied with the aqueous vapor necessary to prevent nocturnal chills. As Mr. Harvey observes in his pamphlet, the atmosphere is so excessively dry that "dead animals upon the prairies do not rot ; they dry up." This accounts for the previous-mentioned rapidity of solar evaporation.

Previous to the time that the above passages were written nothing like an extensive manufacture of salt at this place had been attempted. Some

parties, however, had evaporated considerable quantities of the surface brine both by means of solar and artificial heat, and the product obtained had been carefully analyzed by eminent chemists from New York City and other places, and the result declared by them was as above stated. But it is thought that the statement of Mr. Harvey in regard to the strength of the surface brine, although no doubt intentionally correct, is, nevertheless, inaccurate.

During the summer months, and when a considerable interval of time has elapsed, characterized by an absence of rain and the prevalence of the warm, dry winds which he mentions, the constant evaporation from the surface of the wide, shallow basins or pools of salt water often suffices to reduce the brine contained therein to the strength of 28.8 per cent.; and in fact when such a state of the atmosphere has prevailed for a long time the recession of the water from the edges of the basin not unfrequently leaves thereon an incrustation from a half an inch to an inch in thickness of almost pure salt; but the brine as it oozes from the soil has not been found to exceed 15 per cent. in strength. It has been found that the rapidity of evaporation at Syracuse and other Eastern springs is in the proportion of 2 in the summer to 1 in the winter. Owing to the absence of heavy falls of snow and the considerable prevalence of dry winds at this place during the winter months, it is believed that the proportional evaporation during this time will be greater.

Early in the summer of 1869, Messrs. Cahn and Evans, having leased six hundred and forty acres of land from the State Government for that purpose, commenced work preparatory to sinking a well in the immediate vicinity of one of these salt springs, and at a distance of about one and one-half miles from the Market Square of the city; and having erected a derrick and procured an engine and the necessary machinery they proceeded early in autumn to effect this purpose, keeping an accurate record of the rock and other formations through which they penetrated. By means of this record, with the aid of such knowledge as is obtainable of the ledges exposed in different localities, an approximate and reasonably definite conclusion may be formed as to the location of the center of the basin.

At a depth of about sixty feet they came upon the strata of blue shales which crops out at the surface on the Blue river about twenty-five miles to the westward, showing that the dip of the rock is to the east and towards the well. Mr. Evans states, however, that he is not informed whether or not any of the strata through which he has penetrated appears in any of the ledges to the eastward. At a depth of about seventy-two feet they struck a thick bed of soft yellow sandstone which appears at the surface three miles south of the well and near the southern limits of the town, and also seven miles to the north, showing a sharp, almost abrupt inclination from each direction, and indicating that the well is situated at or about the center of the basin so formed. This indication is strongly corroborated by the fact that at a depth of about two hundred and fifty-two feet they came upon the strata of magnesian limestone of which the State House is constructed, and which is worked in the quarries of Beatrice and Ashland, places respectively at about equal distances to the south

and northeast. These facts also indicate a much larger available area than is found at the eastern springs; the group of productive wells at Syracuse being comprised within a tract of land not exceeding in all fourteen acres, and the Salina group within an area of about thirty-three acres, outside of which limits no productive wells have been sunk.

At the depth of three hundred feet the bed-rock of red sandstone was struck, in which, after having penetrated it to the depth of forty feet, the work has been suspended for the purpose of procuring pumps and tubing with which to exhaust the well of fresh water.

To those who are not familiar with the process of salt manufacture by means of solar evaporation, a brief consideration thereof may not be uninteresting; and at the same time a partial comparison will be attempted between what is now being done at the Eastern salt springs and what it is reasonable to expect will be done here in the future.

The ground near the wells is usually divided off into blocks or squares of several rods, between which are spaces or streets of convenient width, a map of the whole resembling the plat of a town. Across the squares in one direction are constructed vats or troughs sixteen feet in width and about eight inches in depth, in which the brine is exposed to atmospheric action. Covers sixteen feet square and adjusted with grooves or rollers are provided with which to prevent the brine from being diluted by falling rain. For the purpose of calculation these covers may be taken to represent the number and size of the vats, and accordingly this is the size meant wherever the word vat is hereinafter used.

As shown by the result of Mr. Harvey's experiment, six inches in depth of saturated or $33\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. brine, that being the usual amount, exposed in one of these vats would under ordinary circumstances evaporate in thirty-six hours, or twice that quantity would be evaporated every three days, leaving as a product 147,456 cubic inches, or over 68.36 bushels of salt. This process repeated seven times every three weeks for twenty-one weeks during the summer months, would result in the manufacture of 3,349.64 bushels, and repeated seven times every six weeks for thirty of the remaining thirty-one weeks in the year would produce 2,392.60 bushels, which added to the former would make a total amount of 5,742.24 bushels or 1,148.44 barrels of salt annually from one vat. Multiply this number by one thousand, the usual number of vats supplied from one well, and from the products subtract one-fifth of itself as an allowance for the difference in the amounts of salt contained in saturated brine and brine of eighty degrees strength, and from the balance subtract one twenty-fifth of itself as an allowance for the smaller quantity of the weaker brine evaporated within the same time, (a calculation sufficiently accurate for all practical purposes,) and the entire amount of salt which may be manufactured annually from one well will be seen to be 882,001.60 barrels,

Supposing, what is not at all probable, that the brine should prove to be possessed of only sixty degrees strength, the rapidity of evaporation being the same, we will subtract from this amount one-fourth of itself as an allowance for the difference in the product between equal quantities of the two brines, and from the balance subtract one twenty-sixth of itself as an

allowance for the smaller quantity of the weaker brine evaporated within the same time* and it shows a result of 636,058.84 barrels annually. Change the supposition so that the strength of the brine will remain at eighty degrees and the rapidity of evaporation will be reduced one-half, and we have only to divide the first product obtained by two, which will leave us an annual yield of 441,000.80 barrels. Uniting these contingencies, that is, supposing the strength of the brine not to exceed sixty degrees and the rapidity of evaporation to be only one-half as great as it has been demonstrated to be by experiment; we will divide the second result obtained by two and there will still be shown an annual product of 318,029.42 barrels. Making a deduction of one-fourth from each result obtained, as an allowance for loss of time consequent upon injuries to or breakage of machinery, and bad weather, and they will be left, in the order named, as follows:

1st	-	-	661,501.20 barrels.	3d	-	-	330,750.60 barrels.
2d	-	-	477,044.13 do	4th	-	-	238,522.60 do

While the railways now being constructed and those projected will give us direct connection with the Eastern markets and enable us to compete with Eastern salt manufactories upon their own ground, it is certain that we shall be called upon to supply all the vast territory lying between the Mississippi river and the rocky mountains, so that three dollars per barrel may be safely considered as an extremely low estimate for the minimum price at the wells. The cost of the empty barrels furnished at the wells, due allowance being made for the cost of transportation, it is estimated cannot exceed forty-five cents each; to this we will add ten cents per bushel as the cost of manufacture, and deducting the whole from three dollars, it leaves two dollars and five cents as the net value of a barrel of salt at the manufactory. This calculation exhibits the net value of the three annual yields as above supposed, in their order as follows:

1st	-	-	\$1,356,077.46.	2d	-	-	977,940.46.
3d	-	-	678,038.73.	4th	-	-	488,970.22.

The foregoing statement, in which every allowance is made for which any reason can be imagined, compares very favorably with any that can be made concerning the Eastern manufactories. The brine obtained from the wells in the Syracuse group varies in strength from sixty-four to seventy-four degrees, the average strength obtained from them all being sixty-eight degrees. The brine obtained from the wells in the Salina group varies in strength from thirty-two to seventy-six degrees, the average strength from all being fifty-nine degrees. The average annual product of the wells at Saginaw is seventy-two thousand barrels, while the rapidity of evaporation as proved by experiment is from two to three times as great here as at any of the places mentioned.

The purity of the salt obtained is also worthy of great consideration; for while it will be remembered that until means of refining it were adopted the salt from the Eastern manufactories contained so large a proportion of impure and foreign substance as to render it nearly unfit for meat-packing and other similar uses, it will not be forgotten that analyses of the

salt obtained here prove it to be free of any deleterious substances, and, with the exception of from three to five per cent., pure chloride of sodium.

It would seem, then, that no further doubt need be entertained of the extent and value of the salt deposits at this place; and when it is considered that less extensive territory and less productive wells than that which has been sunk here have been, by reason of the number of men and the amount of capital employed in the manufacture and commerce of the salt, sufficient to build up and maintain considerable Eastern cities such for instance as Syracuse, which depends in a great degree upon her salt wells for the sources of her prosperity; these developments may be looked upon as at least a very favorable augury for the future of the city of Lincoln.

Vats and troughs for the conveyance of the brine have been erected quite extensively at one of the largest of the salt springs near this place, and considerable quantities of merchantable salt are being manufactured from the surface brine. As was above stated this brine when it oozes from the soil is of about 15 per cent. strength, but the action of the atmosphere soon reduces it to the strength of 20 per cent., or about 60 degrees, and in case of continued drought even as high as seventy or eighty degrees may be found. If the supply were inexhaustible and it were not subject to dilutions in case of heavy rains or freshets, the foregoing calculations might be used as an estimate of the salt which might be made therefrom. But unfortunately considerable difficulty has heretofore been experienced from this source, especially in spring and fall when the rains are most frequent. But doubtless this difficulty may be obviated either by the diversion of the stream of Salt Creek, the building of dykes, or by some similar expedient; and even if it be not, during the summer months, and at times when there is little rain, sufficient quantities of salt may be manufactured to render the occupation very lucrative to those engaged in it and a source of wealth to the town. Most men would be satisfied with an annual income no larger than is indicated by dividing the fourth of the sums above named by three or even four. It is certain, then, unless the old maxim "figures won't lie" can be successfully controverted, that the people of Lincoln have a valuable interest in the salt basin, vested and indefeasable except by some unusual providential dispensation.

* To render the calculation strictly accurate 1-27th should be deducted in this instance and 1-26th in the former. The estimate used allows a longer time for evaporation than the experiment shows to be necessary.

CHAPTER VI.

CONCLUSION.

The task, such as it is, which we proposed at the outset has already been completed, but perhaps a few words may yet be profitably said concerning the town at which the enterprises therein described have been, and are being, promoted.

Since the last of the series of articles comprised in this pamphlet was published in the *Statesman*, about six months have elapsed, and in that time no inconsiderable changes have taken place both in the town itself and in the condition of the public works. The population which was then estimated, perhaps a little more than it would bear, at two thousand souls, has now increased to from two and one half to three thousand souls. More than three scores of buildings have been erected for residences and business houses, nearly all of which are of good size and substantially built.

Pursuant to the statutes of which mention is hereafter made, the State Prison Inspectors and Commissioners of public buildings opened their public sales on the 6th and 9th days of June 1870, respectively; the former offering for sale over thirty thousand acres of choice lands lying in the immediate vicinity of the capital, and the latter offering, besides about twelve thousand acres of lands of a saline description, six hundred and seventy-six valuable city lots. The sales continued during one week and resulted in the disposal of about fifteen thousand acres of land and four hundred town lots, from all of which was realized not less than one hundred and forty thousand dollars.

At the former date also the Inspectors selected from the several plans proposed for the contemplated Penitentiary buildings, that of Mr. Wm. Foster, of Des Moines, Iowa, which was adopted and placed on file in the office of the Secretary of State. Of the plan so adopted the following is a general description:

Commencing with the Warden's house, we have a building 75x86 feet, with basement and four stories. The basement contains kitchen, dining room, cellar, bath rooms, force pump, pantry and closets.

On the first floor are fifteen rooms, embracing Warden's reception room's, Warden's private room and office, clerk's office and room, armory, reception room and store rooms.

On the second floor are sixteen rooms among which are the parlor, sitting and bed rooms, a suit of four rooms for the Physician, and of five rooms for the Inspectors.

The third floor is devoted to the use of the guards, and contains fourteen rooms and eleven closets.

The fourth floor contains four bed rooms and four store rooms and water tanks.

On each side of the Warden's house is a wing 14x50 feet. The first floors of the wings are used for guard houses. The second floors for hospitals, the third floors for the female prisoners.

Extending right and left from these wings are the buildings containing the cells. These are each 50x223 and there are two rows of cells in each, 40 cells in a row and five tiers high, making 400 cells each, 800 in all. Each cell is constructed of stone and can accommodate two prisoners. Each tier of cells is surrounded by a balcony three feet wide, protected by an iron railing and connected by stairs at the end of the building. In the rear of the prison proper, are eight workshops, each 40x160 feet.

There is also a building 58x203 feet, the first floor of which is occupied by the prisoners' kitchen, dining room and bakery, and the second floor by the chapel, library, hospital kitchen, physicians' office, hospital nurses'

rooms and baths. A wing 40x72 feet affords a wash room and laundry.

A prisoner locked in his cell has three doors to pass before he gets outside the building, and the Warden's house is shut off completely from the prison proper by six iron doors.

Around the whole, distant forty feet from the buildings is a stone wall, six feet thick at the base and four feet at the top, and twenty-two feet high. At each angle of the wall is a guard tower, thirty-six feet in height. The space enclosed is 600x660 feet.

On the thirteenth of June, one week thereafter proposals from builders for the erection of the Warden's house, one wing containing two tiers of forty cells each and certain portions of the walls, a workshop, and in all about three-fourths of the building and appurtenances were received and publicly opened and read by the Inspectors at the Representatives Hall and the contract therefore awarded to the Hon. W. H. B. Stout, of Blair Nebraska. A stipulation being entered into with sureties to the satisfaction of the Inspectors for the completion of the work contemplated in the contract within one year from the letting thereof.

The sales having been adjourned on the 11th, word was given out by the Commissioners and Inspectors that early in September, or soon after the Burlington & Missouri Railroad, then rapidly being pushed towards this place, should have reached here, a further sale of lots and lands would be opened, at which time over twenty thousand acres of the choicest lands in the State, lying within a short distance of the Capital, and the balance of the unsold lots and blocks situated in desirable locations, would be offered.

In the mean time, the other public enterprises affecting the interests and prosperity of the city have been pushed rapidly forward. A telegraph line has been extended thither in advance of the B. & M. R. R., and was put in operation in time for use during the public sales. The State University and Agricultural College and State Lunatic Asylum are nearly completed.

As yet, except that the well has been sunk to a depth of 500 feet, no developments have occurred requiring a modification of what is said of the Salt Basins and well in another place.

Except such as are incident to its continued, and almost marvelous growth and prosperity, no important changes affecting the interest of the city, other than those above mentioned, occurred to me as having taken place.

Only about two and one-half years have elapsed since the Commissioners, by official proclamation, called the town of Lincoln into existence. The village of Lancaster, which was included within its site, contained in all less than a half-dozen of buildings of every description. At the present time that number has been increased to over three hundred and fifty, and the number of inhabitants in the town will not fall short of twenty-five hundred souls. The appreciation of real property, which was so low at the time of the first public sales that the Commissioners nearly despaired of being able to make sufficient sales of lots to defray the expenses of building the State House, has risen to such an extent that means have been obtained from that source sufficient not only for the building of the

State House, but also for building the State University and Agricultural College and the State Lunatic Asylum, and about six hundred lots belonging to the State yet remain to be sold.

The cash valuation of the real property of the town belonging to private individuals, as ascertained from the assessment roll, is \$456,956. Nine of the church societies for which reservations of town lots were made, as has been stated, have erected neat and commodious houses of worship, and edifices will be erected by the remaining societies early in the present autumn. Six societies, viz.: the Methodist Episcopal, Protestant Methodist, Christian, Presbyterian, Congregational, and Catholics, have been duly organized for some time past, maintain pastors, and observe the regular stated services. There are three schools in town in which the ordinary branches of common school education are taught by an able corps of teachers. Advantage is being taken of the facilities offered in the width of the streets for the setting out of trees for park rows; two large hotels, in addition to the one large, and many smaller ones now in use, have been constructed; while the business of building substantial residences and business houses is being engaged in to an extent difficult of belief to one who has not seen it; and one thing at least is evident; that is, that every one in Lincoln is confident that he has cast his lines in pleasant places, and where there is to be within a few years a large, prosperous and beautiful city. The question is; do the facts warrant these conclusions? It is thought that they do. The location, size and organization of the public buildings and institutions have been as far as possible described; and it has been shown to be in the highest degree probable, if it is thought too much to say that it has been demonstrated, that an inestimable value has been brought to light in the results obtained from the sinking of the salt well. An abundance of durable building material is accessible. To quote again from Mr. Harvey:

"In Lancaster [this] county there are found inexhaustible quarries of a dark reddish free-stone, somewhat ranging in color, the most of it resembling the Seneca or Potomac stone, of which the aristocratic brown-stone fronts of the Fifth Avenue and Washington are made. It is so soft when quarried that it may be crumbled between the fingers, but a few weeks action of the atmosphere hardens it so that it can scarcely be marked with a knife. It has been used sufficiently to prove its valuable qualities.

"Around the upper tributaries of Salt Creek there are great quarries of a bluish limestone, of fine fracture, and presenting all the characteristics of the Trenton stone. Some of the outcrops expose a face of rock in seams of three inches to six feet thick, of twenty five feet vertical, and can be traced for many miles along the bluffs.

It will be remembered that the State Lunatic Asylum has been constructed solely of the above mentioned "dark-reddish freestone" or sandstone, which has also been freely used in the erection of the State University. Its durability and value as a building material have been abundantly proven. It contains a considerable admixture of iron, and its dark reddish or brown color presents a rich and beautiful appearance when worked into ashlar and laid into the walls.

The Penitentiary is being constructed of a beautiful gray magnesian limestone found in inexhaustible quantities about 9 miles south of Lincoln,

on the line of the Midland road. This quarry is of recent discovery and the material is nearly as hard and susceptible of fine polish as Italian marble.

The climate is mild and healthful, and physicians have recommended a residence here for persons afflicted with lung diseases and rheumatism. Apples, pears, grapes, currents and berries have been sufficiently tested to prove that they can be easily and profitably cultivated; in some parts of the State cherries and peaches are also successfully grown.

The surface of the surrounding country is rolling prairie, and the soil is a rich black vegetable mould, from two to ten feet in depth. It is slightly impregnated with lime, contains just enough of sand to keep it friable, and is entirely free from stones and gravel. It does not cake after rain, is easily plowed to any depth required and, has proven itself adapted to the profitable growth of nearly every crop cultivated north of the mouth of the Ohio river. The subsoil is generally a yellow clay not impervious to water, like most of the blue aluminous clays in the Eastern States.

It has been proved by experience that the average yield of grain and other crops is as follows: Wheat, from twenty-five to thirty bushels to the acre; corn, forty to sixty bushels; oats, forty-five to fifty; potatoes, seventy to one hundred; onions, one hundred and fifty; and of all farm crops a greater production is attained than any of the North-western States.

It is believed by many whose experience has rendered them competent judges, that the wild grasses which grow at the rate of from one and a half to three tons per acre, both upon the table-lands and bottoms, are more nutritious, and that sheep and horned cattle thrive better upon them, than the cultivated grasses of the East. Cultivated grasses may be raised, however, to any extent desired.

Owing, it is presumed, to prairie fires the timber in this locality is not plentiful, and is confined to the banks of streams, along the entire length of which it grows in more or less continuous lines on each side, except, as is frequently the case, where the streams suddenly change their course, or crook, forming peninsulas sometimes thirty or forty acres in extent densely covered with trees. The native trees are cottonwood, a light, porous, yellowish-white wood, resembling in appearance the cucumber tree of New York; the red and white elm; cedar, hickory, hackberry, willow, black-walnut, "black-jacket," red and burr-oak.

In Lancaster county there are no longer any government lands subject to homestead or pre-emption, although there are hundreds of thousands of acres of such lands in the State; many of them, as fine as any lands in the State; many of them, as fine as any lands in the world, are situated on the Blue river, only about twenty-five miles from the Capital. Excellent farm lands, situated within a radius of ten to twelve miles of the Capital, may be purchased both from railroad corporations and individuals at prices ranging from five dollars an acre upwards, according to location and the nature and extent of improvements.

The cars are now running on four railroads which are surveyed and in all likelihood will be built to Lincoln. The Burlington and Missouri River Railroad is now completed to Lincoln, and will take a westerly direction to Fort Kearny, with the Union Pacific, thus placing us at nearly the center of a great trans-continental thoroughfare. The Omaha and South-western is completed to the Platte, and connects with the B. & M. R. R.; from this place, it will probably take a southwesterly direction, forming a junction with the Kansas Pacific and intersecting the Central Branch of

the Union Pacific and St. Joe and Denver City railroads. The Midland Pacific railroad is now graded to this place and a considerable portion of the track is laid. It will form a junction at Nebraska City with the Council Bluffs and St. Joe, S. L. and B. and M., and Quincy and Nebraska City railroads. The Nemaha Valley railroad is being built thither from Rulo, near which place it forms a junction with the Council Bluffs and St. Joe & Atchison & Nebraska R. R., and a considerable portion of it has already been completed. Both the last mentioned roads will form junctions with the Union Pacific. Several other roads have been projected and some of their lines have been surveyed. A glance at the map will show that we shall soon be connected with all the most important thoroughfares east and west, and at a point where many of them will intersect each other. As a railroad center it is believed that we possess great advantages over any other town in the State.

The produce of stock and grain-raising and of butter and cheese manufacture, which can be carried on as successfully here as in any State in the Union, can never fail of commanding a good price and finding a ready market.

Nearly every description of mechanical, mercantile and professional business is represented here, the two former by from one to a half-dozen places of business for each, about fifty in all, besides hotels, restaurants, &c., and the latter by from fifteen to twenty individuals each. Manufactures have not yet been attempted, although the demand for manufactured articles, always prevalent in a new country, would doubtless afford to many branches of that business an entirely satisfactory support.

Mechanics find here ready employment and good wages; to the capitalist opportunities are presented for the easy and profitable investment of his funds; and to the poor men and others who cultivate our broad and fertile prairies the earth yields an abundant increase. As for the scholar and the student, the one will find a cultivated and appreciative society, and to the other will soon be offered the privileges of one of the best of educational institutions. Members of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows and Good Templars and of the Order of A. F. and A. Masons will find each of these societies established here and in a flourishing condition; for the benefit of each, as has been said, city lots were selected and reserved at the time of the location of the town. The Order of the Grand Army of the Republic has also an encampment at this place. A State Historical and Library Association has been organized and the nucleus of a library has been obtained. It is proposed as soon as sufficient funds are secured to erect upon their lots a suitable building provided with lecture and reading rooms, etc.

There are three well regulated newspapers published in this city, the *Nebraska State Journal*, daily and weekly, (Republican). The *Nebraska Statesman*, weekly, (Democratic), and the *Intelligencer* a real estate monthly.

The people are characterized by sobriety, intelligence, industry and perseverance, and they will make the most of the advantages which Providence has thrown in their way; and, if it is true that their faith in the future of their city is unbounded, it is equally true that, upon a careful survey of the whole situation, it is impossible to say that that faith rests upon insufficient foundations.

LANCASTER COUNTY Medical Society.

This Organization was perfected at Lincoln, on the 24th day of May, A. D. 1869, the following named resident members of the profession, being present, and at that time adopting a Constitution and By-laws and electing officers for the ensuing year, viz:

D. W. TINGLEY, M. D.	H. D. GILBERT, M. D.
F. G. FULLER, M. D.	L. H. ROBBINS, M. D.
J. M. EVANS, M. D.	GEO. W. FRENCH, M. D.

Subsequently the following named gentlemen became member, viz:

J. W. STRICKLAND, M. D., November 3d, 1870.
JNO. W. NORTHRUP, M. D., " " "
GEO. A. GOODRICH, M. D., " " "
C. C. RADMORE, M. D., January 3d, 1869.

Subsequently the following named gentlemen became members of the

Nebraska State Medical Society, viz:

F. G. FULLER, M. D.	GEO. A. GOODRICH, M. D.
L. H. ROBBINS, M. D.	D. W. TINGLEY, M. D.

On the 16th of July 1870, the County Society, lost one member by the death of Geo. A. Goodrich. The remaining members reside in the city.

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